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# The Mind of Christ Jesus in the Church of the Living God

Bishop Brent

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## In the Church of the Living God

## A CHARGE

BY

THE RIGHT REV. CHARLES H. BRENT
*Bishop of the Philippine Islands*

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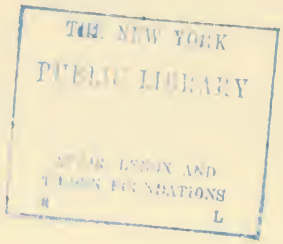


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*I have two objects in mind in writing this Charge. First to make clear to my present and to my prospective fellow-missionaries the principles that actuate my administrations. Secondly that donors to this Missionary District may labour under no misconception as to the character of the work which their gifts support.*

C. H. B.

*Iloilo, P. I., 26th June,* 1907.

# THE MIND OF CHRIST JESUS
IN THE
# CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD

## I

It has been complained against our day that the Church of God has fallen into confusion, and that a state of anarchy and lawlessness prevails in our own Communion. Though I have had my dark moments during which I have been timorous before the problems of the times, my prevailing conviction is that the modern shifting of perspective in matters of religious opinion is not a symptom of disintegration, but, on the contrary, a phase of normal progress, a phase which has never been wanting throughout the Christian centuries. The arrangement of one generation never suits the next, and the seeming lack of order which vexes us is but the preface to a superior presentation to mankind of the things of God. We can see as we look over the past that every little while there is a change of accent in Christian truth, and doubtless when our successors review the

day in which we live, our forebodings, lack of proportion, and conscientious scruples will dwindle into insignificance before a new change of accent set to meet the requirements of a new generation.

No thoughtful observer can fail to see underlying our extremes of individualism an honesty and a desire to apprehend the truth that is reassuring. But this comfortable assurance cannot justify an attitude of quiescence on the part of those of us who are set over the Church as leaders, and who may not substitute mere personal influence for active and practical government. It is the creed of pessimism to leave things alone. Every man who by virtue of his vocation is called upon to guide others must make his contribution of thought and effort with generosity to those who differ, but also with clearness and firmness.

For nearly six years I have been trying to see my way clear that I might worthily play my part as leader, a position from which I shrink more than of yore, but which, in that I never sought the responsibility, I must believe to be a trust from God that I am under obligation to execute. Personal con-

viction is a priceless possession, whatever its origin, but I have lived long enough to discover that under the ægis of religious conviction are sheltered self-will, prejudice, and bitterness which lead to injustice and invincible ignorance. The impatient and commanding character of my own convictions moves me to fear lest I should fail to pay to the convictions of others that deference which is due where there is a clash of opinions in controverted questions. For this reason, and the added one that I am possessed of a mind that is slow to apprehend an opponent's point of view, I reach a conclusion in vexed questions slowly and laboriously. Thus it is that my decision comes tardily in matters that would have been decided speedily by a mind more gifted or of a different type. To be quite frank, my conclusions have been reached rather by seeking to gain the mind of Christ than by mere logic or reference to the external authority of history and tradition with their manifold and conflicting voices. It has been my fervent desire — without slighting, much less ignoring, my personal convictions — to place them on the same level with the convictions of others

and give to both equal consideration — an unattainable ideal, perhaps, but one worth aspiring to. In matters of religion above all else, we need to look every man not on his own things but on the things of others, for in no department of life is bias more rampant. The effect of such a course is not, as I used to think, the creation of an atmosphere of uncertainty and timidity. On the contrary it deepens one's central convictions so that they grasp the soul with unwonted power. It is an exhilarating pursuit to aim at stating a position that varies from one's own in terms of fairness without regard to the advantage or disadvantage of either party concerned. Life becomes enriched by the process through being simplified. Pious opinions of secondary value and speculative origin fall to the rear and are catalogued among the indifferent things where they belong. Points of contact and unexpected reconciliations discover themselves among seeming antinomies, and beneath the differences and disputes of churches and theologies there becomes visible the one Church of the living God.

I suppose every serious man who, like myself, has

reached middle life, which is the age of sincerity, has learned to fear mere theory in religion. He desires no conviction relating to spiritual things which is not the fruit of his having laid his own life against and proved. If he enters controversy it is not for the purpose of achieving a triumph of phrases, vindicating personal opinion, or promoting party advantage, but that the truth may conquer at the cost, if need be, of a frank change of front on his own part. Fairness to opponents in every department of life is, I think, increasingly noticeable in modern controversy of whatever sort. The signs of the times are that the distinguishing characteristic of the opening era of the Church will be magnanimity. The magnanimous mind has as vigorous convictions as the mind of militant dogmatism. But there is a difference. Magnanimity is sparing of contradiction; dogmatism dines daily on its antagonist's discomfiture. Magnanimity strives to share its good things with all men and enrich itself from the treasures of others; dogmatism claims aristocratic descent and exclusive sovereignty. Magnanimity is conviction steeped in the fairness of humility; dogma-

tism is conviction clothed in the authority of arrogance. Magnanimity is not latitudinarianism as ordinarily understood. Latitudinarianism is mere breadth — sometimes breadth only in the direction of its peculiar predilection, in other words a phase of dogmatism. But magnanimity partakes of the nature of love, of which it is an aspect, and has length and depth, height and breadth.

Our Communion is moulded on ample lines. She is to us the best available — not the only — means of holding us in the Church of the living God. By our loyalty to her we can never fail to be gainers. By loyalty I mean living in the full breadth of her freedom, rejoicing in her vision, striving to enlarge it by releasing her from all that obscures Christ's personality and obstructs human fellowship in Him, that her simplicity, her love of constructive truth, her magnanimity may be known to all men. We have our Constitution and Canons which declare her polity. What one of the framers [1] of the Constitution of the United States maintained regarding that famous document applies to all

[1] Alexander Hamilton.

written constitutions, our Church's included: — "If nothing could be done that was not expressly named in the articles of union, these articles could never fit the uses of a great and developing state. The Constitution under so strict an interpretation would be but a lifeless legal document and nothing more; a bone for dogs to quarrel over and not a rod to govern with. This Constitution . . . was, and was meant to be, merely an outline. It is necessary to look at its great intention, and to judge it to be the possessor of all the powers implied in that intention." Every attempt to narrow down freedom to fit the letter is bound to be followed by a reactionary movement bent on working the doctrine of "implied powers" to a dangerous degree.

Theoretically and practically the interpreter of the Constitution and Canons of our Church is the Episcopate, with the whole body of the Church as final court of appeal. I say the Episcopate and not the bishops advisedly. Primarily a bishop is bishop of the Church and only incidentally diocesan. He is the Ordinary by virtue of his consecration, not of his installation or enthronement, which merely

determines the limits of his strictly personal dealings. His judgments are representative in behalf of the Episcopate, and not individual opinions. In other words, the Episcopate is one. The Church is not a federation of dioceses where the bishop rules without reference to any part of the Church but his own jurisdiction. That would be to adopt the principle of Congregationalism on a magnified scale. The liberties he allows either expressly or tacitly cannot be of purely local significance except so far as they bear on exclusively local conditions or are governed by diocesan legislation. His judgments go to establish precedents for the whole Church. That which is allowed a presbyter in one diocese as within the Church's limits of freedom in faith, discipline, or worship, cannot be justly denied in another diocese or missionary district.

As in the case of the bishop, so also in the case of the presbyter. A presbyter is first of all presbyter of the Church. His obedience is to the Episcopate, only incidentally and for order's sake to the bishop of any given jurisdiction. In matters of fundamental importance it is as bishop of the Church

that his diocesan addresses him; in matters of exclusively local colour, as diocesan. A given practice may be expedient here and not there, and the bishop may advise his clergy accordingly, but once having received a man, he cannot with fairness forbid him to pursue another course equally legitimate.

At this point it may be well to remind you that there is no distinction between the office of a bishop of a diocese and that of a bishop of a missionary district excepting in matters of administrative detail. The difference that there is arises from the fact that the diocese is more highly organized than the missionary district. As a corollary it follows that the liberty of a presbyter is equal in both alike, and if the bishop of a missionary district has it within his power to be more arbitrary with his clergy than the bishop of a diocese, it is all the more incumbent upon him to be impartial and generous. Letters Dimissory which form the canonical requirement for admission into a diocese or missionary district either state or imply that the presbyter concerned is in good standing and not "justly liable to evil report

for error in religion or for viciousness of life."[1] As time goes on it cannot fail that bishops of broad vision should acquiesce in, commend, or initiate a line of action unwonted, or disregardful of the written code. Thus we get the law of custom growing up side by side with the written law, modifying, altering, contradicting the latter. This is unavoidable, and commonly an indication of growth. It is as irresistible as it is necessary. Changes in the written law do not make new customs and new thought, but new customs and new ideas ultimately work changes in the written law which is the formal index of the Church's mind. However, such changes cannot be made lightly.

A feature of progress is the enlargement of permissive use and the erasing of intentional ambiguity, which is a phase of intellectual dishonesty, from the statute book. Sometimes an enactment is adopted which, though seeking to be explicit, proves in practice to be capable of contradictory interpretations. It is creative of confusion and not morally defensible to retain it on the score of its

[1] Canon 15, § V (1).

doubtfulness. There is a difference between being frankly agnostic and sitting astride the fence. The former is honourable doubt; the latter a political trick.

Of course, momentary deviations from the established order under the demand of a special exigency belong to the category of exceptions. Every conceivable situation cannot be provided against by enactment in the wisest written code, and it is taken for granted that in circumstances wholly abnormal common sense must give the final verdict. This verdict, however, is for the moment only, and forms no precedent for a settled line of conduct in wholly dissimilar conditions. But when time has tested the persistence of some innovation bearing on normal circumstances, and if it has passed the stage where it could be reasonably attributed to the idiosyncrasy of an individual, the written law should not be allowed to conflict with the fixed practice, but should be so modified as to recognize the legality of the custom. There is only one alternative, and that is to suppress the practice or whatever it may be by concerted action on the part of the Episcopate.

The wide-reaching consequence of a single bishop's permissive action in the permanent alteration of the established order is such as should make him hesitate to move solely on individual initiative, and encourage him to throw the responsibility before action upon the whole Episcopate.

The foregoing principles are equally applicable to those injunctions regarding the character and conduct of public worship known as rubrics. A number have fallen into disuse. As long as they remain in the Book of Common Prayer they survive to contradict a thinking and conscientious majority and to create confusion, — as historical milestones they would serve their purpose better by being relegated with the *Articles of Religion* to the end of the Prayer Book, or preserved in a discarded edition rather than in that in current use. In every case where they have not been abandoned by common consent or in universal practice, but none the less are falling into desuetude, they are to be interpreted with breadth.[1] The danger, of course, lies in the

[1] While correcting the proof of this Charge I find the following paragraph in a discussion of Freedom in the Church in the *Spectator* of 27 April, the force of which I recognise. The formularies of the

weakness which moves men who believe they have the power, I do not say the right, to disregard the laws with impunity, to discover a reason satisfactory to themselves for doing so in their own interest and for personal indulgence.

Even in our small fellowship there have arisen questions which in their settlement involve more than local issues; practical questions which are impatient of delay. I have referred to them in general terms elsewhere, but the moment has arrived when I have to handle them in detail. Though they have arisen in connection with particular cases, I have endeavoured to discuss them impersonally and dispassionately. In each instance I look beyond the interest of the individual to the general welfare. There are matters of local expediency in which you have a right to expect me to be led and not to guide; in such I am ready to be led. There are other matters in which I have a right to expect

"Anglican Church must be regarded as designed to bind together the largest possible number of Christian citizens who can be united for common work in the common cause of a common faith. But this being so, they must also be held to be somewhat elastic, and as it is impossible that they should be perpetually readjusted, no inquisitorial means should ever be taken to force men to a uniform interpretation."

you to be guided and not to lead. In such it is my duty to require it of you at the possible cost of suppressed preference and inconvenience to respond to my leadership. It is only on such terms that I can discharge my obligations to God and man.

## II

On the basis of the principles thus enunciated I propose to discuss: —

1. *The Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament;*

2. *The Relation of Confirmation to the Holy Communion;*

3. *Liturgical Expansion, and the Enlargement of Devotional Freedom;*

4. *Our Responsibility to Other Christian Churches.*

1. *The Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament.* The natural meaning of the rubric at the close of the Communion Office in an unequivocal way precludes the possibility of reservation for communicating the sick, and, by implication, for any purpose, for it would be odd indeed to forbid it for utility and permit it for sentiment. The rubric reads: — *And if any of the consecrated Bread and Wine remain after the Communion, it shall not be carried out of the Church; but the Minister and other Communicants shall, immediately after the Blessing, reverently eat*

*and drink the same.* The denial of the practice is clinched by the provision of a special service for the sick, hedged in though it is by an unreasonable hindrance [1] which the conscience of the Church has long since ceased to consider binding.

The custom of occasional reservation for special contingencies — a practice, I would say, almost as ancient as Christianity itself — and, in fewer instances but none the less in a marked way, of perpetual reservation, has grown up so as to make the rubric at the end of the Communion Office of no effect among those whose desires run counter to it. In addition to those who actually practice reservation are a number of men who refrain only because of the rubric, which in England has behind it the menace of State interference and penalties.

My own preference and practice, and the course I would recommend to my clergy, is to celebrate the Eucharist in the sick-room where it is possible to do so with benefit to the sufferer and with due decency and dignity. Otherwise, in accordance with the

[1] *The sick person. . . . . must give timely notice to the Minister, signifying also how many there are to communicate with him (which shall be two at least).*

rubric of common sense, to carry the Sacrament directly from the altar to the communicant from the service of the day. But I believe that the law of custom has made it legitimate to have perpetual reservation for the sick if the pastor has it as a matter of conscience. I have not always held this opinion, and my doubtfulness as to the expediency and wisdom of the practice is unaltered. Nor is the administrative attitude which I now adopt due to any pressure or argument from others. It is my sense of justice that moves me. A presbyter comes to me from another diocese with Letters Dimissory, or perhaps I find him in my jurisdiction when I am assigned to it; his settled use has been to have perpetual reservation. Perhaps he has a more emphasised reverence for the Holy Communion than I. In company with a large number of Christians he believes that fasting Communion is of obligation. He even may out-Roman the Romans who allow of liquid food in some circumstances without special dispensation. I personally have never considered that there is sufficient warrant in Scripture, history, tradition, sentiment, or in all together for imposing

the observance on the conscience of Communicants, however pious a practice some men may deem it. But it does not require great perspicacity to recognise that perpetual reservation is the logical result of enforced fasting Communion. However, to continue, this priest is stationed in a district where the primitive character of the habitations precludes the possibility of having a service in them; he has a large area to cover in his ministrations; sickness is rife; his developed sacramental sense is naturally reflected in his people. What is his bishop to do? Arbitrarily deny him under difficult conditions a freedom that his former bishop accorded in easy conditions? My judgment is that without grave injustice there can be no curtailment of that measure of liberty that usage has permitted in the Church.

As I am dealing not with a theory but with an actual condition, there is an injunction which I would add in this connection. In no circumstances and under no pretext will a service of "Benediction with the Sacrament," or the carrying or exhibiting of the Blessed Sacrament within or without the Church save only for purpose of Communion, be tolerated

or allowed. I say this not that I have any reason to suppose there exists the desire for such sacramental extravagances, but in order that my position may be clearly defined.

2. *The Relation of Confirmation to Holy Communion.* Here again we have rubrics that are unambiguous on the surface, but which, on the plea of historical explanation, are by probably a majority of our American bishops labelled for domestic use only.[1] My reading of history does not admit of this interpretation, though I am averse to exalting Confirmation into a rite generally necessary to salvation as is implicitly done when the unconfirmed and all who are not ready and desirous to be confirmed are forbidden access to the Table of the Lord. In my mind it is the logic of experience in a missionary church, and not theoretic reasoning or historical

[1] *And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.* Second Rubric after *The Order of Confirmation.*

See also the last exhortation in *The Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants.*

*It is expedient that every person thus baptised should be confirmed by the Bishop, so soon after his Baptism as conveniently may be; that so he may be admitted to the Holy Communion.* First Rubric after *The Ministration of Baptism to such as are of Riper Years.*

deduction, that has determined the dominant interpretation of the rubrics in question. To me the Apostolic Rite of Confirmation is one of the most expressive, dignified, and intelligible ordinances in our Christian heritage. But does this make it right to count it, in all cases and in all circumstances, indispensable for Communion? Frequently, as in my own experience, a missionary goes to an isolated and unshepherded community where the majority of the people are connected with other churches — indeed it may be that none belong to us. On a recent occasion, by way of illustration, I was the first minister of religion to visit such a community in eighteen months. I was but following the dictates of the Spirit of God in inviting all communicants of other churches in good standing to receive Communion with me; and there followed one of those services where the power of God was made manifest to the least susceptible. My observation leads me to the conclusion that as a rule the communicants of other churches are carefully prepared morally and devotionally for the Lord's Supper, whatever differences there may be in sacramental philosophy and

use. For this reason I should like to see the broader interpretation of the rubric of admission prevail and modify its wording. I see, however, no justification for inviting "all who love the Lord Jesus" to communicate. If, on the one hand, it is our duty to guard the spiritual rights of the baptised, there still remains the co-ordinating duty, on the other, of playing our part as stewards of God's holy mysteries and requiring at least some more satisfactory symbol of preparedness than the momentary impulse of the individual. Not to go this far would be to degrade the Sacrament to the level of a charm.

3. *Liturgical Expansion and the Enlargement of Devotional Freedom.* In our Communion, which boasts of no body of systematic theology put forth by authority, it is of the utmost importance that her liturgical deposit, which is the Church's fundamental theology, the expression of her inmost mind, declared in terms of worship, should be protected from the interference of individuals and held inviolate from interpolation by unauthorised hands. It is expedient to give ample play to individual opinion, but in its embodiment it must be made clear that

it is individual until or unless the Church as such orders otherwise. I have no exaggerated reverence for the Book of Common Prayer. It is not incomparable; it is incomplete; it is in some instances ridiculous in its rigidity, as for instance in the requirement that an office so ill adapted for the purpose as that for the Burial of the Dead should be used in the case of infants. But aside from special occasions for which provision is made for divergence, no one has a right to add to a service unauthorised prayers or hymns to suit his ideas or fancy. The bishop's *jus liturgicum* is recognised in a limited degree in the provision which says: "For days of Fasting and Thanksgiving, appointed by the Civil or by the Ecclesiastical Authority, and for other special occasions for which no Service or Prayer hath been provided in this Book, the Bishop may set forth such Form or Forms as he shall think fit, in which case none other shall be used." [1]

I wish a much larger freedom were given to the bishop in conjunction with his presbyters to com-

[1] *Concerning the Service of the Church.*

pile additional services — over and above those that we have, and not as a substitute for them. The rejection a while since of the proposed Book of Offices was unfortunate and fomented the spirit of discontent. Many, if not most, clergy introduce supplemental services at one time or another, though the integrity of the Prayer Book is for the most part respected. Certain phases of our belief alter as time goes on. Take for instance the growth of the widespread and commendable custom of prayers for the dead. But the proposition of a Communion Service for the departed was not entertained by General Convention, and there is no right resident in bishop or priest to authorise or use any other Communion Office than such as may be adapted to that end from the Book of Common Prayer, in which the principle of praying for men after death is meagrely and almost unintentionally recognised.

It is primarily on the ground of liturgical inviolability that I adjudge that those who believe in the invocation of saints have no warrant for introducing the non-scriptural form of the "Hail, Mary," or hymns or appeals addressed to saints, into any

Prayer Book service or placing them in such relation to it as to give them the appearance of standing on the same plane as the authorised formularies. So far as the doctrine itself is concerned I can see no reason for forbidding those who believe in it to teach it as a pious practice that has been closely associated with the article of the creed, "the Communion of Saints," from early times — though not the origin or chief meaning of the article as Harnack seems to maintain. But the doctrine is a matter of individual opinion. Its legitimacy, it seems to me, depends on whether those at rest can hear the voice of those on earth as some passages of Scripture may be understood to intimate; but from lack of evidence I am agnostic in the matter, and in consequence do not take any interest in the practice of invocation. Probably if the doctrine had not been battered out of shape by extremes of use it would be as free to-day from the *odium theologicum* as certain psychic investigations and speculations which are busy along similar lines. It is good to commend ourselves to the prayers of others, especially of those whom we believe to be near God, if we are sure that we can gain their ear.

In this connection there are some things I am constrained to say. Invocation is not worship. The dangerous refinements of meaning between λατρεία, δουλεία and ὑπερδουλεία are unwarranted, mischievous, and wholly contrary to Scripture. To introduce invocation in connection with prayers to God, and to address the saints in the same posture of reverence, gives the observance a character which does not rightly belong to it, and which in the minds of simple folk can hardly fail to people heaven with a galaxy of demigods. If invocation must be, an occasional request of the saints for prayers such as we make of our friends on earth would seem to me to be more in accord with the idea than the daily importuning of them. By the "saints" I understand all the faithful departed whether or not canonised by a church. *En passant*, is it not unfortunate that our own Church Kalendar has not in it such names as Seabury, Kemper, Whittingham and Brooks?

The use of the Scriptural "Hail, Mary" by those who believe that she can hear and take pleasure in the constant repetition of the salutation is as seemly

as was the use of the same words by the angel Gabriel, though I lament that the misleading and inaccurate substitute for — you cannot call it translation of — the Conciliar word *Theotokos* or *Deipara*, "Mother of God," which by a change of emphasis misrepresents and imperils the object of the phrase, should in any circumstances be tied up with the sufficient and delicate greeting of Gabriel.

It is significant of the mind of those clergy of the English Church who believe in and teach the invocation of saints that the recent Royal Commission found but four churches where hymns addressed to the Virgin Mary were used, a fact all the more indicative of self-restraint when we remember that the Church of England has not the misfortune to be limited to a single hymnal as we are.

Adhering to my contention for the inviolability of our formularies and with a sense of the high importance of liturgical worship, I am convinced that we are sadly crippled by our studied disregard of informal public worship and extemporaneous prayers. None should be so well able to pray spontaneously as those who have had a sound liturgical training.

It would be an advantage if from time to time we were to lay aside the conventional accessories of religion and escape from "the odor of phrases" into what is at once a simpler and a more emotional mode of approach to God. Though there is no authority for it, there are few progressive parishes of any type of churchmanship that at some time, either during a "mission" or in connection with some department of work, do not resort to unauthorised services of an informal type in which extemporaneous prayer finds place. It must be so, and the pity is that the Church does not make provision for and encourage such services to supplement the liturgical. But let them be strictly supplemental. It is always a mistake to detract from the high dignity of a liturgical service either by informal manner of rendition or by irresponsible interpolation. I am further convinced that there are occasions when all the solemn ceremonial possible is not amiss in connection with formal worship. Every kind of stone, from the rough-hewn granite to the polished diamonds, finds its place in the walls of the City of God.

If it be urged that, as things are, nothing forbids

the use of extemporaneous prayer in the Sunday school room or parish building, I reply that, in that extemporaneous prayer or services of intercession which need more explicit language than the Book of Common Prayer provides are as sacred and necessary in their place as the established liturgy, it is an indignity to shut the doors of the church building in their face.

I believe that unless definite action is taken in the direction of this larger liberty the law of custom will prevail more and more over the written law until the latter is a dead letter, and we have a confused mass of supplemental devotions instead of an orderly system observed by clergy trained to its use.

4. *Our Responsibility to Other Churches.* The Church of the living God has as its distinguishing feature life, abounding life that rises unimpaired, yes, refreshed, from exigencies that would annihilate a merely human organisation. The Church's vitality is the consequence of her being the residence of the Lord and Giver of Life, the Lord of to-day, in whom we live and move and have our being. Her motive is Holy, her scope is Catholic, her foundation

is Apostolic. She is the special though not exclusive sphere of Christ's presence on earth. He is in her for purposes that are not to be found elsewhere in the universe, God-filled though it be. He is in her assemblages, ordinances, and institutions after a manner and in a degree that is unique in all His wealth of manifestations whether in nature or in society. Upon her perpetuation in the civilised world depends the maintenance of common morality, not to mention moral refinements, the achievement of even that moderate success in character-building which marks the pathway of Christian history, that buoyancy of hope which casts upon the harsh disciplines of life something akin to transfiguring radiancy. Upon her extension to every corner of the world that is ignorant of the truth as made known in the good news of the Saviour's message hinges the consummation of God's beneficent purposes for the human race, the full knowledge of Christ's Personality by men, and that unification of the nations of the world which has ever been the dream of philosophers, the labour of philanthropists, and the prayer of saints. Nothing human can reach its goal ex-

cept in and through the Kingdom of God of which the Church is the efficient symbol, *the pillar and ground of the truth.*

But where is this Church? It "partly is, and wholly hopes to be." One group of men says her hall-mark is submission to Peter's chair; another, loyalty to the Bible; another, adherence to the Vincentian motto [1] or perhaps to two thirds of it; another, acceptance of the belief and practice of the first six centuries; another, the principles of the Reformation, and so on, each group reaching its decision according to its training, tastes, interpretation of history, or prejudice. If, as Father Tyrrell suggests, any one church or school of thought within a church could "point triumphantly to the Christian ἦθος of" that church, "to the religious spirit developed by her system as by no other," external marks and claims would merit higher respect than is the case. Neither the Roman, the Greek, any of the Protestant churches with which I am familiar, nor our own, exhibits a superior "Christian ἦθος." Each has its own distinctive type of righteousness

[1] *Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*

and its individual disposition. But the same degree of devotion to Jesus Christ, of hunger and thirst after righteousness, of brotherliness, is found somewhere in each and all of the churches alike, though in no one exclusively or pre-eminently. Naturally we ally ourselves with that church which presents the type most congenial to us. Whatever historic or theoretic necessities constitute the qualifications for Catholic recognition, no body that manifestly and progressively struggles to put on the mind of Christ and whose adherents bear those clear tokens of God's Spirit that cannot be simulated — self-sacrifice to the death for Christ's sake, triumph over sin, world-wide love — can be read out of the Church of the living God. To say that Protestant churches in that they have abandoned a certain historic order are not Catholic according to a fixed definition may be true, but it is idle folly to think or speak or act as though they were not of the Church of the living God who, although He designed a visible unity, has proved to those who are not too blind to see that He can and does use the broken order which man has chosen in its place. As well might

the gardener who prophesies that a certain plant will not live if reared in unwonted conditions deny that it has true life when experience proves that its vitality is full and its beauty unimpaired. *What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.*

The logic of the situation requires us to look with greater fairness on the things of our brethren, and to put off the spirit of aloofness which Christ exhibited only in the presence of deliberate wickedness and hardness of heart. The doctrine of separatism cannot but be hateful to God. Out of the very stones will He raise up children to Abraham, as history declares, if Abraham's lineal descendants lapse into Pharisaism, pointing to phylacteries inscribed with the pride of aristocratic descent as their sufficient credentials. Our first duty all around is to cease theological and ecclesiastical back-biting and to be loyal to one another in secret — not to try to win Christians from the allegiance that binds them by sneering at or decrying systems or teaching that we do not sympathize with mainly because we have never been at pains to understand them. It is a poor business tearing down other people's walls

to build up our own. On the other hand, it is a great happiness to repair the breach in a neighbour's fabric; that is to say, to help the member of another church to lay hold of his privileges with renewed earnestness and reality. I have had many a surprise of late since I have faced vexed questions with the determination to do full justice to the point of view opposed to mine. There are not a few things that are looked upon as mutually exclusive which according to my experience best fulfil their vocation when they are made to be yoke-fellows.

The cultivation of the Catholic as opposed to the sectarian spirit is our greatest work at present. I am not opposing frank, open controversy, feeble and unwilling controversialist though I am. Controversy conducted in good temper and in search of the truth is valuable. I am simply pleading for the putting on of the mind of Christ that we may look on the things of others interestedly and fairly. We can best prepare for it by identifying ourselves, when we pray, with those who are separated from us by chance rather than by choice. My hope is that the development of this temper will lead us by

degrees to natural fellowship culminating first in federal, and then, as "state rights" gradually fade, into organic union. Christianity is still very young, the youngest but one of all great religions, and I am looking centuries ahead of to-day.

But we must labour as well as hope. If our Communion is to justify its boast of holding a strategic position and its claim to leadership, we must shed, more than we have yet seen fit to do, our reserve and play the part of foremost companion. Consciousness of the possession of large privilege should drive us into the performance of service commensurate with our claims. Truth is not such a delicate thing as to be susceptible to infection from close contact with conscientious error or ignorance that has never had a fair chance to become enlightened. It does not sit passively on a throne in heaven waiting for earth to seek it, or at best stretch down a timid hand from above. Christ Jesus, the Way and the Truth and the Life, *being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being formed*

*in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.* He consorted with notorious sinners, *Him who knew no sin God made to be sin on our behalf,* He lived the life of a Jew, obeying its ordinances, sharing in its crude worship — Oh, how crude, in many respects how repulsive, it was! He could have won in no other way. Nor can we. Even if we were more sure than the surest of us can be of our denominational contentions, we could not make them a just ground for separatism. Indeed, the more certain we are of our position, the more readily can we afford to occupy every inch of common standing ground in sight. This is not lapsing into Protestantism but rising to the full stature of Catholicity. If we have the truth it will abide secure and win the day; if not, happy shall we be to lose that which appears to be what it is not.

The question of the Ministry seems to be the Gordian knot. Other questions are secondary. A noted Congregationalist minister, who in a few days of fellowship bound me to his lovely soul, astonished me by showing how his belief in the real and unique

manifestation of Christ at the Lord's Supper to and in the congregated believers differed from my own only in philosophic explanation. At the recent Melbourne Conference, Presbyterians and Anglicans agreed regarding Ordination that the act, "when regularly administered, involves prayer and the imposition of hands. With regard to Ordination this Conference affirms the following to be the essential conditions: full membership in the Church; an inward and personal call of the Holy Spirit; a recognition by the Church of this call after due inquiry into intellectual and spiritual fitness. The laying on of hands in Ordination we understand to be the visible symbol of bestowal, in answer to the prayer of faith, of authority and grace by the Holy Spirit for the work of the Ministry. Authority to perform the act of Ordination comes from God, the Father, through Christ the Mediator, by the Holy Spirit as a living agent in the Church, and is exercised by the appointed officers of the Church." This on the side of theory and history.

But I do not believe that all is done when after poring over our books we come together and find an

intellectual basis of agreement in Melbourne or Shanghai. Actual sharing with one another of our good things as far as conscience permits will do more than anything else to advance God's truth and unite us according to His purpose. It is not merely that others are lacking in privileges possessed by us which we can lay at their disposal, but also that they have that which we have not and wherewith they can enrich us. I never refuse, when invited and free to avail myself of the opportunity, to preach to Christ's people of whatever name. Moreover, I cannot refrain a feeling of admiration for those who extend to us this courtesy in the face of our statutory frigidity towards them. I do not hesitate to ask the ministers of admittedly great communions like the Presbyterians and Methodists to go with me as far as they can go and our own laws permit. I only wish it were legitimate to recognise their prophetic gifts more generously than we are authorised to do. Now our pulpits are closed to them without distinction; they are not permitted to assist even in services which a layman can conduct, or in any way officiate in a "congregation of this Church." But the law of

custom, sheltering itself under the "implied powers" of Canon 19, on occasions when those in authority deem it expedient, has accorded to "persons not ministers in this Church" the use of the church building for addresses, sermons, and services for the benefit of miscellaneous gatherings.[1]

My reference thus far has been to Protestant Churches because the Roman Catholic Church sits aloof in proud isolation, coming near the Protestant Churches only to strike them. *I labour for peace; but when I speak to them thereof: they make them ready to battle.* There is little we can do relative to Roman Catholicism beyond a sincere endeavour to be fair. There are two sides to its character which are wholly distinct — the curia and the church, the one being political, the other religious. The former is to be fought, the latter, though giving ground for controversy, is to be recognized as a Christian ally, however haughty and aloof in habits. That which

[1] Since this was written the General Convention has amended Canon 19 by adding the following words:
"*provided* that nothing herein shall be so construed as to forbid communicants of the Church to act as lay readers, or to prevent the Bishop of a Diocese or Missionary District from giving permission to Christian men who are not Ministers of this Church to make addresses in the Church on special occasions."

is baneful in the church, exaggerated ecclesiasticism, tyranny over conscience, arrogant dogmatism, is chiefly due to the constant pressure of the curia. Nor is it as a church that we can best fight the political intrigue and pretensions of Rome, but as citizens of a nation whose very existence is prophetic of Rome's final relinquishment of aspiration to temporal power and her lust of domination. The Reformation was the proclamation of the divine character of nationalism to the exclusion of no Christian nation, however feeble. The world has only just begun to feel the commanding force of Christian national life. Slowly but surely is it emancipating the countries of Europe and extending its influence even to the Far East. By the time its work is done Apostolic Delegates will no longer struggle to parade as ambassadors of a temporal power in worldly courts. If they survive at all it will be as frank-hearted representatives of a Pope resolved to play his part as the spiritual leader of a spiritual church, backed in his purpose by a representative cardinalate. It needs no prophetic gift to forecast the final effect of Christian nationalism. Christian nationalism is an agency of

God making for spiritual freedom, and is as invincible a force as resides in human society, having in it the power of God's hand which nothing can stay. The emancipation it begets is as sure to come to pass as the rising of the morning sun, and patriotism, sober and whole-hearted, on the part of honest citizens will speed the day. But at best it must be slow, after the manner in which God's mills grind.

## III

In the midst of many things that cause religious distress we have reason to be deeply grateful that through the work of criticism the Bible is returned into our hands not only unimpaired but also with new illumination and inspiration shining from its pages. The final proof of its inspiration does not rest in the argumentative defence of its authenticity, but in its power to inspire. It requires a steadier and more thorough use than many of us are wont to give. To me it becomes more and more the main agency through which to enter into the personal presence of God and lay hold upon His life.

The Bible has two kinds of obscurity, the kind that the distance of centuries and incomplete data veil in incurable uncertainty, and the kind that will evade mere intellectual penetration and scholarship but which in the presence of eager ambition to put on the mind of Christ vanishes as darkness at the touch of dawn. The first kind may be left to the scholars

to puzzle over without any loss to our spiritual efficiency. But unless we dissipate for ourselves the second kind, our impoverishment is perilously great. The duty of finding Christ daily in His written word can have no substitute, however the habit may be supplemented by other means to the same end. The fundamental things are the uncontroverted truths of the Bible, and upon them really depends salvation. We may deduce certain doctrines and practices bearing on the soul's growth from isolated and doubtful passages of Scripture, but if we push them to the fore and take them out of the category of *res mediæ* we lose poise, that is to say we fall into error. The characters of the new Testament were created by means that are beyond dispute. Peter, Matthew, the Mother of Jesus, and the rest doubtless had beliefs and customs other than those which appear, but they were so unimportant as not to merit mention. The New Testament characters are the representative characters of Christendom. None since have surpassed them in excellence. The influences that made them will make us, and nothing else is capable of doing so. We cannot go astray

in throwing our full weight on the great undoubted facts of Scripture. This done, that which our taste or idiosyncracy may add is a matter of comparative indifference.

In order to encourage an ardent and intelligent study of the Bible in our own fellowship, I am going to recommend that during the year ahead of us we give special attention to St. John's Gospel. The knowledge that we are daily studying the same book in common will be an incentive and aid to regularity and perseverance. I suggest this Gospel because it is more full of deep meanings than the others. The writer was not simply a careful recorder of facts. Through a long lifetime he used his experience with and knowledge of the WORD of God as his daily food (1 *John* i. 1–4), until the mind of Christ became his mind and he was unable to distinguish between his thoughts and the thoughts of Christ, between his will and the will of God, so perfectly were he and his Master at one. His book is not a history of our Lord considered as an outside fact, but as embedded in and speaking through a disciple's experience. It is a declaration and illustration of

the intimacy that grows up between Christ and His friends, and a promise to us of what we are to expect and claim as our Christian heritage. *I know mine own, and mine own know me. He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

I have finished. If I have approached the matters discussed in this Charge from another angle than that from which you view them it is because I know no other way. The questions considered are not questions of my own raising but such as are forced upon me by actual circumstances. Some of them I should probably have never passed spoken judgment upon at all had not my office made it a necessity. I have written with the consciousness that there are other ways of discussing the topics I have ventured to deal with, but every man must speak as the Spirit of God moves him, and the truth will be found in the confluence of many waters.

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